



City of Arts & Innovation

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Nov. 30, 2023

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City of Riverside Finalizes Agreement With All-Electric Autonomous Shuttle Company Ohmio

Company agrees to bring its international headquarters to Riverside and manufacture vehicles here

RIVERSIDE, Calif. – The City Council voted unanimously on Tuesday (11/28) to finalize an agreement with the all-electric autonomous shuttle company Ohmio to move its international headquarters from New Zealand to Riverside and manufacture the vehicles here.

The company is touring multiple potential sites in Riverside for its facility. Ohmio also will bring its research and development function to the city, test vehicles here and designate Riverside as its point of sale, which will result in a portion of all sales taxes coming to the City.

Ohmio chose Riverside in part because the city is home to the Southern California headquarters of the California Air Resources Board. The company also expects to work closely with representatives from UC Riverside, its Center for Environmental Research and Technology (CE-CERT), California Baptist University, La Sierra University, and the Riverside Community College District.

“Riverside is emerging as a global center for clean and green technology, and Ohmio is the next step in that evolution,” Mayor Patricia Lock Dawson said. “This company provides an important building block for Riverside’s future economy.”

The City will spend as much as \$2.5 million to bring Ohmio to Riverside, which includes about \$1.5 million to lease or purchase three autonomous shuttles for testing on Riverside streets during a two-year pilot program.

All-electric autonomous shuttles sell for roughly \$300,000 to \$400,000, which would generate \$26,250 in sales taxes to the City for each vehicle. Estimates call for the construction of 550-750 shuttles within the first five years, generating \$1.65 million to \$2.25 million in sales taxes to the City.

The shuttles manufactured by Ohmio in Riverside will be the first end-to-end, all-electric autonomous shuttles manufactured from the ground up in the United States. They seat eight people and have room

for six more people to stand with the ability for different seating configurations. Ohmio shuttles travel up to 25 miles per hour and have never been involved in an accident.

The shuttles will be limited to specific locations and routes within the city, which have not been identified, and would not compete with routes operated by the Riverside Transit Agency. Each shuttle will have a safety operator who can take control of the shuttle if necessary and assist passengers with getting on and off the shuttle.

Ohmio shuttles are in operation around the world, in New Zealand, Australia, South Korea, Luxembourg and New York. The company is expanding into the Netherlands, the United Kingdom and Finland.

Ohmio plans to establish an advanced manufacturing facility in the City of Riverside, with the first locally produced vehicles available next year. The company expects to create seven jobs initially, from engineers to technicians, and expand during the next three years to at least 25 jobs.

Experts estimate that every job created in advanced manufacturing spurs the creation of 2.5 jobs in other sectors needed to support advanced manufacturing, meaning more than 100 total jobs could be generated by Ohmio's relocation to Riverside.

“There is a great promise in these autonomous shuttles complementing our existing transit system by bridging gaps and improving connectivity,” Mayor Pro Tem Erin Edwards said. “Riverside has an opportunity to show the world how autonomous shuttles can improve public transportation and reduce the environmental impacts associated with travel.”